

KING HAUNTED BY DEAD WIFE

Sofia.—There is a room in the Konak at Sofia of which King Ferdinand alone has the key. It contains no precious documents, no costly jewelry, no bullion chest, but only the full-length portrait of a princess long since departed. The gentle Marie Louise gazes sadly out of her gilded frame, and though Ferdinand in moments of exhilaration passes by the room with head averted, in days of stress and trouble he seeks to hide his misery in the silence of the locked and secret chamber.

During the last ten months mysterious rustlings have been heard in the National Museum and the horror-stricken populace from room to room, seeking something that could never be found. On these occasions, when King Ferdinand bethought himself of leaving the chapel door open, his dead wife's shadow has been seen to pass the portals, and he has himself knelt at the altar there, his face buried in his hands, as though awaiting a supernatural visitant. No allusion to these vigils has ever passed his lips, for Ferdinand confides in no one.

Over her children the spirit of Marie Louise also broods as fondly as in her lifetime, and the people believe she visits their bedside whenever they are ill. The nurses who cared for Princess Eudoxia during her long illness last year attributed her almost miraculous recovery to the prayers of the dead mother, who was seen in spirit form in the chapel nightly, always kneeling in the same place slowly fingering her diamond rosary beads.

Owes Success to Wife.

King Ferdinand, who has had an extraordinary career, owes his most solid successes to the dead lady who even now watches over him, as he believes, to restrain the impulses against which she vainly warned him when alive, and concerning which even from the other world she has given signs of sorrow and disapproval.

He was the pet son of his mother, the cleverest daughter of the late Louis Philippe, king of the French. She never ceased to plot for the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France, but in the meantime did not disdain to pick up any possible crown for her sons. Her plans were mostly foiled, as in the case of Philippe, older than Ferdinand, who married Princess Louise of Belgium in the hope of succeeding the late King Leopold. But the marriage was so ill-assorted, and Princess Louise showed such violent antipathy to her husband, that a speedy separation was the result.

With Ferdinand, Princess Clementine had no such trouble. He was the most docile and obedient of her sons, inheriting her own subtle disposition and tenacity of purpose.

When Prince Battenberg of Bulgaria had displeased the Russian emperor by his independent attitude, and was consequently forced to leave the country in the dead of night, with only time to throw a coat over his sleeping attire, the palace at Sofia remained vacant. As soon as Battenberg's friends recovered from the shock of his being kidnapped they set off on a tour of Europe to search for a princeling who would undertake the difficult job of governing Bulgaria.

Quietly Becomes Sovereign.

This quest came to the ears of Clementine, who, learning that a favorite haunt of these big game hunters when in Vienna was a fourth-rate restaurant, sent her son to make their acquaintance. After some friendly conversation, during which they did not suspect that he was anything but what his uniform proclaimed him to be—a simple lieutenant in an Austrian regiment—he declared himself their man. Without further preamble he took them round to his mother's palace and thus proved to them the reality of his claim to high birth and his connection with two great royal houses. There was no reason why he should not start a dynasty of his own, and the bargain was quickly concluded. In a few days the citizens of Sofia were greatly astonished to see the flag flying once more over the royal palace, and a young man with a prominent nose and a serious face driving through the town in solitary statefulness. There was no equestrian display, no acclamation, no rejoicing. People were still asking themselves, "How long will Russia allow him to stay?"

Royal Wife Finally Secured.

As soon as Ferdinand felt his throne to be a little more steady, Princess Clementine began to cast matrimonial nets on her son's behalf. But there were few aspirants. Royalties held aloof, and nothing but blue blood would satisfy Ferdinand and his mother. It was by working on the strong religious sentiments of the Duke of Parma that the prize was at last secured in the person of an eldest daughter, the ill-fated Marie Louise, to whom was entrusted the mission of furthering Catholicism in schismatic Bulgaria. Thus was the gentle, fragile idealist, tender offshoot of the pious House of Parma, mated to an ambitious adventurer, of her own rank indeed, but of a temperament



and character entirely foreign to her. The personal inclinations of Marie Louise were all for the cloister, where, indeed, several of her sisters have since found a home, but in deference to her father's wishes she gave her hand to Ferdinand and set off with him to work for the advancement of Bulgaria.

Almost every educational and charitable institution in the country owes its origin to her initiative. In a short time she achieved what he had vainly attempted—the reconciliation of his subjects to a foreign ruler. Legends of her bounty and devotedness still survive among the people today. When an heir to the throne was born, nothing seemed wanting to the happy outlook. But this very child, who should have set the seal on her happiness, became the cause of discord and ultimately led to the untimely death of his mother. Russia, who had viewed with disfavor the consolidation of Bulgaria under a prince about whose election she had not even been consulted, now came forward with her inexorable demand that the future ruler of Bulgaria should belong to the orthodox creed or forfeit recognition by the powers.

Refuses to Be Apostate.

Ferdinand's mind was soon made up, but it remained to him to persuade Marie Louise. Thunderstruck at the alternative, she at once refused to consider what her conscience told her was an act of apostasy. During two whole years she succeeded in getting the baptism deferred, but as Russia grew more insistent, and Ferdinand more anxious for his crown, she was forced to face the inevitable. Resistance availed no longer, and as a last protest she left the country.

The baptism of Prince Boris according to orthodox rites was carried out with great pomp in the presence of Russian envoys, and Ferdinand's position was henceforth secure. Strange to say, his own subjects revolted against the breach of faith which weighed so heavily on their beloved princess, and even Russia's approval did not mend matters. A wave of criticism and contempt which found expression in the Bulgarian press proved the general indignation. Many seized the opportunity to vent their private spleen against a prince whose affected superiority wounded their democratic pride.

Returns to Her Husband.

Nevertheless, Ferdinand, having accomplished his purpose of ingratiating himself with Russia, now began to put things straight with the rest of the world, and for this to succeed it was necessary that his wife should return. But Marie Louise desired nothing more than oblivion. Her maternal instinct, however, strengthened by the insistence of the Pope, and Ferdinand's expostulations and excuses, finally prevailed. She returned to her old duties, resuming her good works, but with the joy of life extinguished for ever within her. It is said that no reproach ever passed her lips and she gave no outward sign that her husband had forfeited respect. To the last she remained his faithful, devoted partner, and her careful advice saved him from many pitfalls such as those into which he since has sunk. With terror she sounded the depths of the dark soul that could instigate the assassination of his premier, Stambouloff, when he dared to oppose him. Vainly did she plead with him to bridle his ambition and devote himself to the real progress and solid development of the country rather than to his own personal aggrandizement. While she lived he made a pretense of dissociating himself from the work of the Contadits in Macedonia, whose outrages filled Europe with horror.

"God will never bless crime," was

her constant warning. "And one day Macedonia will be lost to us through the evil deeds of our wild propagandists."

Saw Impending Disaster.

She was probably the only person who knew whether Ferdinand's secret hopes tended, and she foretold that disaster would come at the moment when his star seemed most in the ascendant. When in the recent war turned against him, the soldiers murmured among themselves: "Surely this is what our princess foretold. Every sin demands its punishment."

After her death, King Ferdinand, desirous of restoring the great state functions which were a vital feature of his court, looked around for a hostess who would share the throne, which from being princely had now been raised to the status of royalty. But it was not easy for him to find a mate. No Catholic princess would give her hand; he made several overtures at the Russian court, but there was no Grand Duchess forthcoming. Finally, however, a Protestant princess of the House of Reuss consented to abandon her spinsterhood and occupy the place left vacant nine years ago by Marie Louise.

Though unpossessed of her predecessor's winning charm, she has nevertheless done great and good work in Bulgaria. During the recent war her devotion to the wounded was unbounded, but it is well known that her married life is by no means happy, her relations with her husband being markedly strained.

Ferdinand himself has never concealed the fact that, in spite of their differences, his heart and allegiance are with the princess, whose shade hovers round him, admonishing and shielding. Confident of her never-failing assistance, he alone is not afraid to confront the stately specter who trails her diaphanous draperies along the corridors of the palace that witnessed the tragic disillusionment of her hopes.

LEARNED HIS GOOD POINTS

Man No Doubt Had Often Been Unfavorably Compared With Dead Man He Described.

It was a contested will case, and one of the witnesses, in the course of giving his evidence, described the testator minutely.

"Now, sir," said counsel for the defense, "I suppose we may take it, from the flattering description you have given of the testator, his good points, and his personal appearance generally, that you were intimately acquainted with him?"

"Him?" exclaimed the witness. "He was no acquaintance of mine!"

"Indeed! Well, then, you must have observed him very carefully whenever you saw him?" pursued counsel.

"I never saw him in my life," was the reply.

This prevarication, as counsel thought it, was too much, and he said:

"Now, now, don't trifle with the court, please! How, I ask you, could you, in the name of goodness, describe him so minutely if you never saw him or never knew him?"

"Well," replied the witness, and the smile which overspread his features extended to the faces of those in court, "you see, I married his widow."

Sure-Thing Player.

"George, you must go right away and ask papa for my hand."

"That's all right, little one. I asked him first."

"What! You didn't wait to ask me!"

"Nixy, Mabel. I'm a busy little man, girlie, and I waste no time on chances."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

GOOD MEN ARE DISSATISFIED

Feel That They Don't Measure Up to Own Standards Every Day in Week.

So you feel that you're a failure because you don't measure up to your own standards, every day in the week? Buck up, brother! That's the way, all good, go-ahead men feel sometimes!

If they weren't dissatisfied with their performances as well as their promises, they'd be trotting around in a circle; and that means business dry rot, if anyone asks you.

A certain amount of self-dissatisfaction is the best tonic in the world for the genius, man. It keeps him from broodin' on bein' a man—like David Harum's flea-bitten dog, you know!

As long as you can find fault with yourself and your works, you're alive, my friend.

When you get to the point where you feel sorry for other men because they aren't such good salesmen, or managers, or presidents—or porters—as you, then is the time for the doctor to put you on a diet and prescribe perfect quiet—to keep you from going crazy about yourself!

Don't get the glooms over self-distrust. Ambition and dissatisfaction are half brothers, anyway! — Exchange.

DID DRAW THE LINE AT THAT

After All, There Was Something the Victorious Insurgents Would Not Be Guilty Of.

The successful revolutionist (for that month) leaned back in his chair. "While you correspondents have been reasonably accurate in your accounts," he remarked, "you have overlooked some of our goods points. We acknowledge capturing the insurgent general, starving him a week, beating him regularly, cutting off his ears and finally banishing him, but—"

He paused that the force of the remark might be fully felt.

"When you say we have been inhuman and given to extreme cruelty, you overdraw it. We haven't even hinted at running him for vice-president."—New York Evening Post.

ECZEMA ON BACK AND CHEST

Bierston, N. Dakota.—"The eczema started on my scalp. It finally went on to the back of my neck, then on to my back, arms and chest. It broke out in pimples first and then seemed to run together in some places, making a sore about the size of a dime. At times the itching and burning were so intense that it seemed unbearable. The more I scratched it the worse it became, and there would be a slight discharge from it, especially on my scalp, so as to make my hair matted and sticky close to the scalp. The hair was dry, lifeless and thin. My hair was falling so terribly that I had begun to despair of ever finding relief. My clothing irritated the eruption on my back. The affected parts were almost a solid scab."

"I had been bothered with eczema for about a year and a half. Then I began using the Cuticura Soap and Ointment. I used them daily for two months, and I was cured." (Signed) Miss Mildred Dennis, Apr. 30, 1913. Cuticura Soap and Ointment sold throughout the world. Sample of each free, with 32-p. Skin Book. Address postcard "Cuticura, Dept. L, Boston."—Adv.

Made the Parson Happy.

It was Dr. Cosmo Gordon Lang, archbishop of York, who, when he was bishop of Stepney, remarked, apropos of the children of the East end: "They are doing a great deal to rebuke the tendency of the clergy to become middle-aged in spirit—dull, morose and superior." And he told one of his favorite stories of an East end cleric who was feeling lifeless and disconsolate on setting out on his daily round of visits, when a little street urchin looked up at him with a cheerful eye and knowing smile, and said: "Uke, young man! That greeting quite reassured the parson for the rest of the day," Dr. Lang declares.

Hard to Break the Habit.

She was turning over the pages of a new song.

"Would you mind running over this accompaniment for me?" she asked him, presently.

"Certainly not," he returned absently, "throw it in the middle of the street and get out of the way!"

Showing how difficult it is for the reckless autoist to break a long-established habit.

Don't buy water for bluing. Liquid blue is almost all water. Buy Red Cross Ball Blue, the blue that's all blue. Adv.

Alas, that a wise man can't help looking like a fool at his own wedding!

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, a bottle 6c.

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